


**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES
SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION
311 W. SARATOGA STREET
BALTIMORE MD 21201**

DATE: July 15, 2015

POLICY #: SSA- CW #16-9

TO: Directors, Local Department of Social Services
Assistant Directors of Social Services
Chiefs of Foster Care
Fiscal Officers

FROM: 
Deborah Ramelmeier, Executive Director
Social Services Administration

Stafford Chipungu, Chief Financial Officer
Budget & Finance

RE: Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program Funds for
Caseworker Visitation with Foster Children

PROGRAMS AFFECTED: Child Welfare Services

ORIGINATING OFFICE: Office of Child Welfare Practice & Policy
Social Services Administration

ACTION REQUIRED OF: Child Welfare Staff and Finance Officers

REQUIRED ACTION: Utilize, Monitor, and Report quarterly use of Promoting
Safe and Stable Families Program Funds for Visitation

ACTION DUE DATE: Immediately

CONTACT PERSON: Helene Hornum
410-767-7247
helene.hornum@maryland.gov

Purpose

This Policy details the code and usage of Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF) Program caseworker visitation funds. Please refer to the Memorandum from DHR's Budget & Finance office for the specific allocation for your jurisdiction. Every local department of social services received a minimum of \$3,000 for their allocation. This amount will allow the local departments to come up with a plan using the guidelines below.

A plan is required for the caseworker visitation funds that describe how you will spend these funds. Please submit your agency's plan to Helene Hornum, Program Analyst, **by August 21, 2015. Failure to submit the plan by the established deadline will result in the total allocation for that local being withheld and redirected by the Social Services Administration to another jurisdiction.**

If one-half of the local department's allocation is not spent by January 2, 2016, any remaining amount will be subject to reallocation to other local departments that are spending their Caseworker Visitation funds. In addition, a local department that fails to submit their quarterly reports will risk reduction and reallocation of their Caseworker Visitation funds to another local department.

Background

Reimbursement for mileage or airfare, hotel accommodations, or meals cannot be charged to caseworker visitation when visiting foster children.

These funds must continue to be used to improve the quality of caseworker visits with an emphasis on improving caseworker decision-making on the safety, permanency, and well-being of foster children and/or on caseworker recruitment, retention, and training.

If local departments propose training for workers, the trainings should be offered on a regional basis. Local departments should also think about their technology needs in order to enhance the quality of visits. For example, these funds could be used to purchase equipment to allow for the video-taping of visits so that the worker's supervisor could assess the visits and help the worker enhance his/her skills.

Again, a plan is required which describes how the jurisdiction proposes to utilize the monies. Please submit your plan by **August 21, 2015**. The plan should be submitted to Helene Hornum, DHR/SSA, 5th Floor, 311 West Saratoga Street, Baltimore, MD 21201.

Charge Codes for PSSF Visitation Funds

PSSF Funds **cannot** be combined with other grants or added to flex fund accounts. The local department is required to maintain separate accounting for its PSSF monthly visitation funds including the amount of funds spent on each service using these PSSF funds. **These funds must**

be spent on specific services and activities related to the purpose of caseworker visitation funds stated in this Policy Directive.

SSA will be closely monitoring the expenditures of each local department at the end of each quarter. As previously stated, if one-half (1/2) of the local department's allocation is not spent by January 2, 2016, the remaining funds may be reallocated to another local department that is spending their Caseworker Visitation funds.

In order to track PSSF funds used for caseworker visitation, please use charge code PCA GC990, Project/Subproject number 0304.91, within the local Child Welfare Services (n00g0003) program.

Use of the funds should be documented on the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program Quarterly Report (Page 4 of 4). The expenditures reported on the quarterly reports must be reconciled to R*STARS to insure that reported data is consistent. The report is to be submitted to Jill Taylor, Permanency Manager, Office of Child Welfare Practice and Policy, Social Services Administration as follows:

SUBMISSION DATES

PERIODS COVERED

October 16, 2015
January 15, 2016
April 15, 2016
July 15, 2016

July 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015
October 1, 2015 - December 31, 2015
January 1, 2016 – March 31, 2016
April 1, 2016 – June 30, 2016

**PROMOTING SAFE AND STABLE FAMILIES PROGRAM
CASEWORKER VISITATION
QUARTERLY PROGRAM REPORT—SFY 2016 FUNDS**

Local Department: _____
 Person Completing Form: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Report Period: _____

July 1, 2015 – September 30, 2015 _____ October 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015 _____ January 1, 2016 – March 31, 2016 _____
 April 1, 2016 – June 30, 2016 _____

Account Name	Account Number/ Project/Subproj ect/ Object	Expenditures Current Quarter	Expenditures Y-T-D	Obligated Funds to Date	Please describe services, activities, or purchases made during the quarter. Please be specific. For example, if trainings for workers was offered, please provide type of training and number of workers who attended.
CASEWORKER VISITATION	GC990 0304.91				

Allocation _____
 Year-to-Date Expenditures _____
 Remaining Balance _____

Mail or Fax the Report to:
 Jill Taylor
 Social Services Administration
 311 W. Saratoga Street, 5th Floor
 Baltimore, MD 21201
 Fax #: 410-333-6556